

Press Release

HARFORD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Department of Planning & Zoning



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"Safeguarding What is
Important to Harford
County Citizens"

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Harford County Historic Preservation Commission Announces 2009 Awardees

(Bel Air, MD- May 15, 2009) The Harford County Historic Preservation Commission has announced its annual award recipients recognizing those who have contributed to the advancement of historic preservation within Harford County. The 14th annual awards were presented during a breakfast ceremony at the Historical Society of Harford County on Main Street in Bel Air. The awards are given each year during May to recognize National Historic Preservation Month.

The theme for this year's National Preservation Month is *This Place Matters*. County Executive David Craig and Council members Mary Ann Lisanti and James McMahan proclaimed May as Harford County Preservation Month and offered award citations to all award recipients. Jim Chrismer, chairman of the Harford County Historic Preservation Commission, acted as master of ceremonies.

The first awards presented were the Preservation Project Awards. The Preservation Project Awards recognize significant achievements in preserving, restoring and/or finding a sensitive adaptive re-use for an important historic property, structure or site in Harford County. This year the Commission recognized two exceptional historic preservation projects; the Red Onion LLC for the revitalization of the Red Onion on Otsego Street in Havre de Grace and the Conits Group for the adaptive reuse of the Bel Air Roller Rink. Charlie Hiner of the Red Onion LLC was present to receive the award. Mr. Chrismer stated "the project showcased the efforts of individuals and the community's commitment to historic preservation".

Ron Benfield and Nick Conits of the Conits Group were present to receive the award for the adaptive reuse of the Bel Air Roller Rink. Mr. Chrismer said "this project not only preserved part of the original construction but gave a new use to a building that may otherwise have been demolished or remained vacant."

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**Harford County Historic Preservation Commission
Announces 2009 Awardees
May 20, 2009
Page Two**

The second award of the morning to be presented was the Special Preservation Award. The Special Preservation Award is typically presented when the nature of the contribution advances historic preservation but does not reflect the criteria necessary for the Preservation Project Award. This year's Special Preservation Award was presented to the Historic Preservation Commission of Havre de Grace for their creation of the Lafayette Trail. The Lafayette Trail is a 4-mile self guided walking tour that meanders throughout the local historic district. Mr. Chrismer commended the members of Historic Preservation Commission of Havre de Grace for their "continued support of education, historic preservation and heritage tourism".

The last award to be presented was the Preservationist Honor Award. The Preservationist Honor Award is given to individuals, museums, organizations or businesses whose work and vision have preserved the richness of Harford County's heritage and effectively promoted the cause of historic preservation over a prolonged period. Henry C. Peden Jr. was presented with the Historic Preservationist Honor Award for his love and devotion to preserving local and state history. Peden has been recognized regionally and nationally for his genealogical research and publications.

The Historic Preservation Commission is an 11 member board which works closely with the Department of Planning and Zoning. Board duties include identifying historically significant properties that exemplify the history of the County, and educating citizens about historic properties and the heritage of the County.

For more information about Harford County's Historic Preservation Program, contact Sarah Corey, Historic Preservation Planner at (410) 638-3103 ext. 1369.